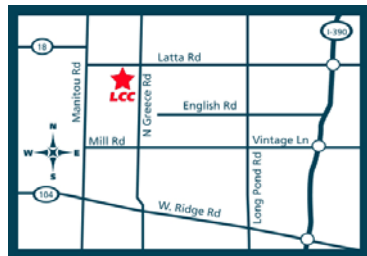




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Real Encouragement is published quarterly as a ministry of Lakeshore Community Church.

SUNDAY SERVICES

IMMANUEL: GOD WITH US

Dec. 19 At Just The Right Time
Dec. 24 God’s Indescribable Gift

MOVING FORWARD... THE EXODUS

Dec. 26 But I Have A Past...
Jan. 2 Excuses, Excuses
Jan. 9 Decision Time
Jan. 16 Press On
Jan. 23 Making It To The Promised Land

FUNNY MONEY

Jan. 30 Easy Come, Easy Go
Feb. 6 An Investment That Outlasts You
Feb. 13 Your Treasure Chest

Feb. 20 Your Body: God’s Locus Of Power

EGR’s (EXTRA GRACE REQUIRED)

Feb. 27 Negotiating Needy People
Mar. 6 Conquering Critical People
Mar. 13 Mastering Manipulative People
Mar. 20 Helping Hypocritical People
Mar. 27 Getting Beyond Gossipy People

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God Did What?

Think of all the ways God could have visited us.

He could have parted the skies, shaken the earth, blown every trumpet in the world all at once, caused the sun to shine really bright or a host of other stunning, attention grabbing things to announce the arrival of His Son Jesus. The King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Creator of everything, the Savior of the world, the Almighty One would have deserved at least as much.

But instead, Jesus came in the most remarkable and humble way imaginable. Little Bethlehem. Stable. Feeding trough. Swaddling clothes. Not the way I’d script it. I doubt that would be your first choice approach either.

So, why?

God wanted (and still wants) to show us that He is with us in ways we can identify with. He came to be one of us, to live among us, to model life for us, to die on the cross on behalf of us, and to rise from the grave like us (someday). See the pattern? Jesus did everything to be with us just as one of us.

What challenge or loneliness or heartbreak are you facing? This Christmas, remember that God is with us. So why not be with Him here at Lakeshore this Christmas season? We have inspiring services planned (see back page for series and message info) that will help you appreciate this incredible concept. And on Christmas Eve, we’ll hold two services (4 pm and 7pm) for your convenience.

God is with us... the only question is, will we be with Him?

Warmly,

Vince

Pastor Vince



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So...How Close Is God?

By Amy Mitchell

This fall, Lakeshore went through the series “God Is Closer than You Think.” One thing that really stood out to me was in the final session . In John Ortberg’s words, “God...comes so that we in turn can be conduits of his presence to other people. He invites us to join him in making things down here the way they are up there.” What an inspiring call! I know that I want to be an active participant. So what are people at LCC doing to “bring up there, down here”? Read the articles in this issue to find out!



Getting Out There And Making A Difference

By Terri Sherwood

On October third, the ladies of Lakeshore joined together and walked the streets of Rochester to raise money for breast cancer research. The 25 ladies (and 2 brave men) raised over \$1000 for the great cause. Sharen Pelow led the pack as a breast cancer survivor. Sharon was the speaker at the November 21 Women's Connection meeting, speaking about getting through cancer with God’s help. What an amazing story!

A Jewish Christmas

By MaryAnn Meisenzahl

Since last summer God has nudged my heart to learn more about Israel, most profoundly by the reading of the Old Testament and the book *Your People Shall Be My People* by Don Finto.

Not by any stretch of the imagination am I a scholar; but God, in his infinite and timely wisdom, is opening me to greater vision and understanding of scripture. Just speaking the Hebrew words *Jehovah Elohim* – The Lord God (Gen. 2:4, 3:9-13, 21), or *El Hayyah* – God of my life (Ps. 42:8) stirs my soul for our Lord Father, our Lord *Yeshua* (Jesus).

Our Savior was revealed by ancient Jewish prophets who walked and talked with *Jehova Elohe Yisrael*-The Lord God of Israel (Ps.41:13). Our Lord promised the Jews that Israel shall never cease to exist (Jer.31:35-36). Isaiah prophesied (Is.9:6-7) the “Child born.” A Jewish child who would grow into a Jewish man who would be called “Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

In the next weeks of candy canes, tinsel-wrapped dreams and time-honored family traditions lets us not forget God’s greatest gift to us, His Son Jesus.

I know we are not bound by tradition in honoring Jesus and need only to seek him, and invite him into our lives. I, however, will face east, look through my window at the fading darkness ushering in a new morning and raise my hands to *El Roi*-The God who sees me. (Gen. 16:13). I will commune with him in praise and thanksgiving for all he has bestowed on me.

And, on Christmas day, after the roast and all the trimmings I will honor my mother’s tradition of lighting the candles on a birthday cake made for Jesus and singing “Happy Birthday.” How many candles? One. For the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

I wish all of you your most joyous, hopeful Christmas and a new year filled with *Yeshua*.

Finishing The Work Update

By Pastor Herb Lawrence

On Sunday December 12, we will be celebrating the second anniversary of our Finishing the Work campaign. We have accomplished much with the construction of LC2 but still have a number of projects to complete. You will have received a letter from Pastor Vince and a general and FTW giving statement citing particulars for the December 12 service. Thank you all so much for your generous gifts of time, talent and treasure to make LC2 a reality and for staying strong to completely FINISH THE WORK.

Fighting The “Island Mentality”

By Cory Hunneman

Over the last year, Ignite Student Ministries has seen some significant changes, particularly due to the addition of the LC2 and the shift to two student services every Sunday morning during the adult services. It has been a year of watching God work in profound ways as new teens have made faith commitments and taken steps closer to God!

But with these changes our leadership team has been growing aware of a flipside danger that every Student Ministry faces to one degree or another... and it’s called the “Island Mentality.” In essence, we bring our young people to the “Student Ministry Island” during their teenage years, they grow and develop closer to God during that formative time, but then we “ship them off” to the “mainland” after graduation and discover that many seem to get “lost at sea” in this voyage back home. A Student Ministry can look like an island when the teens are not given consistent opportunities to integrate and blend with the adult ministries of the church.

Our leadership team recently got away together for a weekend and “Fighting the Island Mentality” in our setting was one of the things we discussed. From those discussions, here’s where we’re starting to land:

Common Ground

There’s intentionally never any ISM-related events scheduled on Common Ground nights, and we encourage our students to attend this service! It’s an opportunity to worship, learn, and build community with the adults in the church. If you have a teen actively involved in ISM, *get them actively involved in Common Ground too!*

Joint Services

Every 2-3 months we shut down our student services one week and encourage the teens to join the adults in the main auditorium. *These are not the Sundays to miss!*

Habits

Real long-term growth in our students will be seen as they develop personal habits during their teenage years that will help them grow on their own. The beauty is that these habits are not dependant on a person or a program in the Student Ministry. *Encourage your student(s) to continually utilize the many resources at the “Habits Shack” in the youth room.*

Parents... we need your help in fighting this “Island Mentality”! Are you in?!

HEAD ONLINE FOR MORE ISM STUFF:

- Check out ISM’s new website: www.ignitestudentministries.org
- Applications & registration fee for students to attend FCWC 2011 are due on January 16th! www.flowercityworkcamp.org
- Dodgeball Tournament: Saturday, January 22nd. Brackets for teens AND adults! www.lccdodgeballtournament.blogspot.com

